

Lancashire UNISON

Retired Members Section

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Newsletter

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Diary Dates 2007

County Hall Talks - 2pm

Friday 26th October

Gill Atherton from the *Pension Service* on entitlement to benefits and form filling

Friday November 30th

Mrs Irene Cottam a first hand experience of *Christmas Day* in the *Work* house.

Northern Sub-Group

First Talk of the Season

Tuesday 9th October

guest speaker is *Mr David Guest*,
of the *BBC Television* programme
North West News

Next Walks

Wednesday 15th August

A walk through the *Duchy of Lancashire Fishing Lakes* at Sunnyside Farm

Wednesday 19th September

Over *Cowslip Hill* visiting the
Great Stone of Fourstones on the way

Preston Health Branch

Tuesday 14th August - at 9am

A trip on the Leeds/Liverpool canal

Wednesday 19th September - at 9am

Trip to Lightwater Village Complex

Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy has always been a problem for pensioners. The combination of limited income linked with form filling for income is undoubtedly getting more frustrating. As mentioned in the last *Newsletter* *Fran Francis* has arranged for a talk at *County Hall* on 26th October by *Gill Atherton* of the *Pensions Service* but as retired members of *UNISON* you are entitled to many services provided for members generally. *UNISON* have an arrangement with *Thompson's Solicitors* (www.thompsons.law.co.uk) to provide members with legal advice and representation.

If you have a pension benefit query *Thompsons* have offices all over the country. A leaflet is available from the *Branch Office* and for information the *Pension Service* phone number is **0845 6006116**. *Thompson's* also have a leaflet regarding general benefit queries ranging from *Disability Living Allowance* to *Housing Benefit*. For information the *Benefit Enquiry Line* is **0800 88 22 00**.

On a more general subject, for example, *Thompsons* have a specific service to deal with road traffic accident compensation issues with a specific help line of **0808 100 8050**.

It may be that we can assist with a query of yours. The *County Adult Services* have recently issued a letter stating that, for payment for carers, only direct debits will be accepted and the letter, apparently, has

UNISON BRANCH OFFICE - Christ Church Precinct, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8XJ.

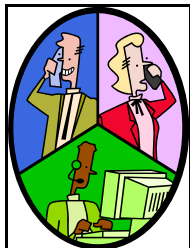
Tel. 01772 533072 or email:- unison@unison.lancscc.gov.uk

no return phone number although it invites queries. Has anyone received the letter and has a problem with it?

Dave Sergeant

Chairman

News Update



Local Government Pensions

The long-running dispute over the removal of the **85 year rule** (under which workers whose age plus years of service equal 85 may retire on unreduced benefits before 65) seems to have been settled because the **Government** have now agreed to allow existing scheme members to retain this benefit until 2020 rather than 2016 as originally proposed. The government has said that the additional cost will have to be recovered from within the new scheme which will be operational from **April 2008** by increased contributions or amendments to the benefits.

Free bus travel

Local authorities are becoming concerned about the cost of introducing free off-peak bus travel for **pensioners** and **disabled** people anywhere in England on local bus services from **April 2008**. They are concerned as to whether the overall costs of the concession will be met by **Government** funds and also the way in which the costs may be allocated as between individual authorities.

Government Changes

The new **Brown Government** is expressing its intention to go down a route of transferring powers from central to local government and of giving more

powers to local communities. This pre-supposes that there are plenty of people in local communities waiting to take on these new roles and responsibilities on a voluntary basis. We shall see.

It is interesting to note that, whereas we used to have a **Department for Education**, we now have a Department for **Children, Schools and Families** and a **Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills**. One hopes that this is not going to lead to further increases in the **“dependency”** and **“nanny-state”** culture.

Roger Rymer

Vice Chairman

Crossroads

Caring for Carers Chorley & South Ribble

Crossroads is a **Charity** that offers a home care and respite service for carers and disabled people in their own homes. They are seeking new trustees. The board of trustees meets in the afternoon of the third Thursday of every month at the **CVS** offices in **Astley Village**. They are looking for a person who is interested in contributing towards the running of an organisation that wishes to give a high standard of care to carers and people with care needs. They work with all age groups.

The work they do is of great benefit to the **Community** and anyone willing to join them will find the work rewarding. For further information please contact their **Care Manager Mrs Joanne Elphick** on 01257 230698 or **Mrs Marilyn Porter** on 01257 277229.

Maureen Vass

Secretary - Executive Committee

Marton Operatic Society

Those of you who came to the talk to see **Ken Dagger** the **‘Chairman of the Society’** and expressed an interest in the Society's production's would like to know, that the **Publicity Officer** has written to inform our members that the next show is **“Princess Ida”**, it's about a girls struggle to be better than a man" (WOWEE THAT MUST BE WORTH SEEING)

It will be performed at **Lowther Pavillion Lytham** from Tuesday October 9th till Saturday the 13th starting at 7.30pm.

Talks at County Hall

Talks booked for 2007 Friday October 26th

Gill Atherton from the **Pension Service** will talk about your entitlement to benefits how to claim and form filling.

As an extra to this talk if you make a note of your questions and let me have them, I will pass them on to **Gill** and hopefully she will be able to get the answers ready in time for the talk.

PLEASE NOTE She will only be able to give advice on general questions, **NOT** individual problems. Also an extra **Liz Carberry** will be at the talk to give information on the benefits of saving and taking out a loan with the **L.C.C. credit Union**.

Friday November 30th

The welcome return of **Mrs Irene Cottam**. Irene's first hand experiences of Christmas Day in the Workhouse.

I am in the middle of trying to get speakers for the **2008** season of talks. I am hoping to get speakers that will accommodate all tastes,

so please:- let me have your ideas on any speaker that you can recommend and would like to see again in our next years programme.

Once again thank you to everyone who comes along to support the talks it couldn't continue without you.

Derian House Stamp Appeal

Please keep sending your stamps to *Derian House*, many envelopes get thrown away, it only takes a minute to tear the stamp off the corner of an envelope (please leave 1 inch around the stamp.) Save the stamps in a container till you get a few to send on to the address below this is an on going stamp appeal for a worthwhile cause.

*Derian House Children's Hospice,
The Appeals Office,
Derian House, Chancery Road,
Astley Village, Chorley,
Lancs. PR7 1DH.*

THANK YOU to everyone who sent bedding for the *German Shepherd Rescue*.

Due to a mammoth response from the many animal lovers out there, the appeal is now closed until further notice. Ted will get round to collect the items from everyone in due course.

Fran Francis"

Talk Organiser - 01772 742459

**Northern
Sub Group**

We have now concluded our **2006/2007** programme, one which has been our most successful if measured only by the number of Members and friends who attended the *Talks, Lunches and the Canal trip*.

Next years programme **2007/2008**

commences in *October* with our first monthly talk held on the second Tuesday of the month at the *Headway Hotel*. Our first guest speaker is *Mr David Guest*, the chief reporter on the *BBC* television programme *North West News* (and who is also the son-in-law of one of our regular supporters).

Ray Rudge"

Treasurer

**Retired Members
Walking Group**

Lancashire County Branch of Unison Walking Group Correspondent: Don Windle, 25 The Howgills, Fulwood, Preston, Lancashire PR2 9LX. Telephone (01772) 713820.

The full *Programme Briefing* is the *February* edition of the Newsletter on the web at:- <http://www.unisonlancs.org.uk/retired.asp>

Diary Dates for the 2007 programme are:- 15th August, 19th September, 17th October, and in 2008 the 9th January.

There will be a *Programme Meeting* at 25 The Howgills, Fulwood, Preston at **2.00pm** on Wednesday **7th November 2008**.

Also please note we now have the *Itinerary* for the **17th October** walk. Walk leader is *Bill Poole* for further information you can contact him on 01253 761519.

This and future walks will be published in forthcoming Newsletters.

Wednesday 15th August

Walk leader is *Flo Windle* you can contact her on 01772 713820 walk starts at **11am**.

Meet in the car park at *Ashbournes Picnic Site* situated 1 mile by road

north of SCORTON between the River Wyre and the M 6.

Landranger Sheet 102. Grid Reference 504 504. Outdoor Leisure 41.

A walk of approximately 8 miles. There are toilets in Scorton Village.

The walk takes us past the *Girl Guide Camp* at *Guy's Farm* through the *Duchy of Lancashire Fishing Lakes* at *Sunnyside Farm* crossing Street Bridge followed by a 300ft climb onto *Harris End Fell* returning via Nicky Nook.

Wednesday 19th September

Walk leader is *Joan Booth* you can contact her on 01772 732177 walk starts at **11am**.

Meet in the *Butts Lane* car park at HIGH BENTHAM this is adjacent to the B6480 Clapham Road some 280 metres east of the offset cross roads in the town centre.

Ordnance Survey Outdoor Leisure 41. Grid Reference 670 693.

A walk of approximately 7 miles. There are toilets 280 metres west of Butts Lane.

Go over *Cowslip Hill* across the River Wenning up yet another steep bank to visit the *Great Stone of Fourstones* then return via natural pastures and the River Bank to *High Bentham*.

Flo & Don Windle"

Walk Coordinators

11th July - Dunsop Bridge Walk

Twelve members joined me at *Dunsop Bridge* Car Park for the 8 mile walk. The weather was dry, a welcome window during a period of unseasonable wet conditions, a grey cloudy start improved to fresh sunny intervals. Our route took us out of the hamlet via a private road up the *Dunsop Valley*, before crossing to

the well known *Trough of Bowland Road* on a bridleway over semi pasture. A permissive path then allows walkers to avoid the road by following *Langden Beck* on its west bank. Here a pair of *Oyster Catchers* were still holding territory, they probably had chicks on the ground.

The area is well known by *ornithologists* for its scarce raptors, but from experience I've found these birds difficult to find especially with a group. No sign of them on the day, other than a quick glimpse of a *Peregrine Falcon* later.

We began our climb to higher ground at *Trough Barn*, and stopped for lunch in the ruins of *Trough House* just before the main climb.

The group was still in good heart after the climb to *Whins Fell Col*, so a diversion to *Whins Brow* summit was made. From here a fine panoramic view opens up across *Morecambe Bay* and then clockwise to a fine array of *Bowland Fells*, including *Clougha, Wards Stone, Wolfhole Crag, Totridge and Hawthornthwaite*, beyond are *Pendle* and *Longridge*.

We returned to the bridleway to descend *Ouster Rake*, a route not safe for horses and a challenge for mountain bikers and even some groups of walkers. The view from the rake into the *Brennand Valley* is quite outstanding.

Through *Brennand Farm* and *Lower Brennand* reminds us that these two isolated farms are still viable with hard work and good husbandry.

A little before the water intake, the route passed the end of the terraced footpath up *Whitendale*. This path made local and national news recently when it was closed by order of the police (the *L.C.C* doing the paperwork), because of

a pair of *Eagle Owls*. These birds are very protective of their territory, having attacked people with dogs. *Eagle Owls* are not on the *British Ornithological* list, so there is some debate on where they have come from.



An easy walk down the private road to *Dunsop Bridge*, where *Puddle Ducks Café* was just closing, but the proprietor kindly agreed to accommodate us, with most of the group participating in refreshments, a civilised end to a sound walk.

Peter Kilgour"
Walk Leader

Our membership is 1856
(including 31 associate members)

Kids logic

A little girl: was talking to her teacher about whales.

The teacher: said it was physically impossible for a whale to swallow a human because even though it was a very large mammal its throat was very small.

The little girl: stated that Jonah was swallowed by a whale.

Irritated, the teacher: reiterated that a whale could not swallow a human; it was physically impossible.

The little girl: said, 'When I get to heaven I will ask Jonah'.

The teacher: asked, 'What if Jonah went to hell?'

The little girl: replied, 'Then you ask him!'

One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast on her brunette head.

She looked at her mother and

inquisitively asked, 'Why are some of your hairs white, Mom?' *Her mother* replied, 'Well, every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white.' *The little* girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, 'Momma, how come ALL of grandma's hairs are white?'

The children had all been photographed, and the teacher was trying to persuade them each to buy a copy of the group picture.

'Just think how nice it will be to look at it when you are all grown up and say, 'There's Jennifer, she's a lawyer,' or 'That's Michael, He's a doctor.'

A small voice at the back of the room rang out, 'And there's the teacher, she's dead.'

A teacher was giving a lesson on the circulation of the blood. *Trying* to make the matter clearer, she said, 'Now, class, if I stood on my head, the blood, as you know, would run into it, and I would turn red in the face...'

'Yes,' the class said. *'Then why* is it that while I am standing upright in the ordinary positions the blood doesn't run into my feet?' *A little fellow* shouted, 'Cause your feet ain't empty.'

The children were lined up in the cafeteria of a Catholic elementary school for lunch. At the head of the table was a large pile of apples. The nun made a note, and posted on the apple tray: *'Take only ONE.* God is watching'

Moving further along the lunch line, at the other end of the table was a large pile of chocolate chip cookies.

A child had written a note, 'Take all you want. God is watching the apples.'